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ON THE RELATION OF BEN JON-
SON'S '*Epicæne*' to Molière's '*Médecin
malgré lui*' and '*Femmes
savantes*'.¹

OF the learned critics who have discussed the sources of '*Le Médecin malgré lui*' and '*Les femmes savantes*,' only a single one asserts a relation between Jonson and Molière. Neither Lotheissen nor Mahrenholtz, to mention only those who are most to be relied upon, are of opinion that Molière should have made use of Jonson's piece. And as to the author who affirms that Molière "took his good" in Jonson, too, I mean Mézières, he has run into an error which escaped the attention of all those who, after him, treated of the sources of the French plays. On page two hundred and six of his work: '*Prédécesseurs et Contemporains de Shakespeare*' (1881), Mézières says:

"Dans une scène qui devance une situation analogue des *Précieuses ridicules* et des *Femmes savantes*, il est invité à lire des vers de sa façon, et il débite avec une complaisance affectée le morceau suivant," and so on. "Toute la coterie féminine pousse alors des cris d'enthousiasme; ce sont des exclamations, des soupirs, une violence d'admiration qui ne connaît plus de bornes. On croit entendre déjà Bélise, Armande et Philaminte applaudir Trissotin."

There is no scene of this kind in Jonson's piece. I can't but think that Mézières, when writing this, had in mind the second scene of the second act of the English comedy which has something analogous, and notwithstanding very different, in it. There is Jack Daw, "un Trissotin, doublé de Mascarille," to use Mézières' words, reading verses to Clerimont, Dauphine and Epicæne who are not spare in applauding. But these persons are no "coterie féminine," and their applause is ironically meant. So that one whom I might cite in asserting a relation between the French and English pieces is in no wise an authority to be trusted.

Notwithstanding, I think there are some places in both '*Le Médecin malgré lui*' and '*Les femmes savantes*' which are so similar to places in the English comedy that a connection between them must be assumed,

¹ For the idea of this topic I am indebted to Professor A. Kisser, Königsberg, Prussia.

though Mahrenholtz, on page three hundred and eight of his work, says that an acquaintance with the English language and literature is not to be supposed.

As to the former of Molière's pieces, these are my proofs for saying that the celebrated French author knew, and made use of, Jonson's comedy. Whoever has read Jonson's stirring work, remembers that Morose, as Clerimont says (i, 1), "has employed a fellow . . . all over England to hearken him out a dumb woman; . . . *her silence is dowry enough*," he says." And, at another place, we hear Morose say to Cutbeard: "I know what thou wouldst say, she's poor, and her friends deceased. She has brought a wealthy dowry in her silence." In the same manner, Molière makes Sganarelle say: "Et qui est ce sot-là qui ne veut pas que sa femme soit muette? Plût à Dieu que ma femme eût cette maladie! Je me garderais bien de la vouloir guérir." We see that both the English and the French author embody the same opinion in one of their personages. Nothing in that scene of Molière's provokes Sganarelle to utter those words; the more reason for thinking that there is no mere coincidence, but a reminiscence.

There is another scene in the '*Médecin malgré lui*,' where I should think Molière was influenced by Jonson. Immediately after having become Morose's wife, the so-called '*Silent Woman*' disproves being dumb. So fluently do the words pour from her mouth that Morose is quite overwhelmed and dismayed and, there is no doubt about it, though the words are not in the text, wishes in his heart she might again become silent.

Likewise, Lucinde in the French piece, after having been, to her father's grief, for a long time thought dumb, addresses her father in such hasty words suffering of no contradiction, to marry her to her lover, that Geronimo who, until then, had employed all possible means to deliver his daughter from her pretended dumbness, conceives the same thought which had, as seen in the preceding lines, united the minds of Morose and Sganarelle; for he exclaims (iii, 6): "Monsieur, je vous prie de la faire redevenir muette."

There are some proofs more which in themselves would, as far as I can judge, not suffice

to show a connection of the 'Médecin malgré lui' with 'Epicène.' I should, by no means, lay stress on them, if they were the only proof of my thesis; but, added to the other and surer proofs from the same piece and to those from 'Les femmes savantes,' they are of some worth. In 'Epicène' we see a captain appear as a lawyer, and a barber as a parson; Molière's comedy shows a peasant acting as a physician. To appear a learned personage, it suffices to wear the clothes usually worn by lawyers, parsons and physicians and, besides, to "smatter" Latin, though it be forged; Otter and Cutbeard in Jonson's piece, and Sganarelle in Molière's 'Médecin malgré lui' are in like manner acknowledged by the public surrounding them as thoroughbred learned men. I should think Molière owed that good trait to his English predecessor, just as he borrowed a thought expressed by Martine in the quarrel with her husband beginning the comedy, from a similar one of Captain Otter's wife. The "she-Otter" in the first scene of the fourth act reproaches her disolute and slandering husband with having raised him out of the dust, and Sganarelle, who is given to his bottle just as the captain is to his cups, is forced to hear from the mouth of his wife: "Devrais-tu être un seul moment sans rendre grâces au ciel de m'avoir pour ta femme, et méritais-tu d'épouser une femme comme moi?" It is true, there is no conformity in the words, but surely there is some in the thought.

II.

In speaking of the relation between pieces such as 'Epicène' and 'Les femmes savantes,' I know, I may easily incur the danger of assuming agreements where there are mere coincidences. Surely I cannot afford to say that Molière borrowed the subject of his much and justly admired piece from Jonson, though the then woman's mania of being or appearing learned is ridiculed by both comedies. So numerous are the pieces of ancient and modern literatures which are cited by critics as leading a character or a scene to that "mosaic work" of Molière's, that I hesitate very much to utter an opinion. Jonson's learned ladies I should rather style "précieuses

ridicules." By their entirely physical love shown in their most indecent behaviour to Dauphine (first scene of the first act) they differ much from the "femmes savantes" of Molière's piece and resemble more the ladies in Molière's earlier comedy alluded to in the preceding lines. Though Molière's thought of making his learned ladies plan an academy is not due to Jonson (for there existed something of that kind in reality), there is, nevertheless, a great agreement in the manner in which Jonson's and Molière's heroines execute or wish to execute their government over the minds of their fellow-men. The lady members of the college in Jonson's piece are (i, 1) said to "cry down or up what they like or dislike in a brain or a fashion, with most masculine, or rather hermaphroditical manner." That, with some restriction, is just the plan of the ladies in Molière's comedy, who, in the second scene of the third act, declare:

" Nous serons, par nos lois, les juges des ouvrages;
Par nos lois, prose et vers, tout nous sera soumis;
Nul n'aura de l'esprit, hors nous et nos amis.
Nous chercherons partout à trouver à redire,
Et ne verrons que nous qui sachent bien écrire."

I say once more the agreement lies less in the plan itself than in the absolute manner in which the English and French ladies behave. The ladies' language, too, is different from other peoples'. In Jonson's comedy Truewit calls his companions' attention to Mrs. Otter's way of speaking (iii, 1): "but mark her language in the mean-time, I beseech you"; and Sir Dauphine himself tickles her ears by loudly, though indeed ironically, saying: "What an excellent choice phrase this lady expresses in." To prove that Molière's learned ladies do the same, I think I need not add scenes; for it is well known that Philaminte who has the same rôle in the French piece as "the grave and youthful matron" (i, 1 Truewit) Lady Haughty, the president of the college in Jonson's work, goes as far as to turn her servant out doors for not being able to "parler Vaugelas."

In some regard she is like Mrs. Otter: just as the latter "commands all at home" (i, La Foole) and "chastizes her subject," that is her husband, to her heart's content, the former does not, though from another motive, allow hers to contradict her in anything she

wishes or does. Sganarelle, of whom I have spoken above, and Chrysale have each something of Captain Otter in them. Otter is, in the fourth scene of the second act, said by Truewit to rail "on his wife, with certain commonplaces behind her back; and to her face —." In the first scene of the fourth act he says: "I confess, gentlemen, I have a cook, a laundress, a house-drudge, that serves my necessary turns, and goes under that title." He slanders her in the utmost manner until she makes her appearance, and then he is "under correction" of his "good princess." Chrysale is in no wise so mean a character. But he, too, behind his wife's back, affirms himself to be the master of his house, and promises things (as in the case of the old female servant Martine) which, in her presence, he is obliged to revoke. And though he thinks the marriage of his daughter to be his work and imagines his will to be performed at least in this case, it is clearly shown by the last scenes of the piece that the union of Henriette and her lover is not executed, before Philaminte, undeceived of Trissotin's meanness, has given up her resistance. So this lady (not unlike Martine in Molière's other comedy) remains "mistress of her subject" to the last, just as the "she-Otter" in the English work.

There are some more points in which Molière's ladies resemble the English collegiates. The latter whose "actions are governed by crude opinions, without reason or cause (iv, 2)" have at first thought Dauphine "a very pitiful knight" and "a very shark," because they "as they are informed" (by authorities such as Daw and La-Foole, in this case) "believe, judge, praise, condemn, love, hate." But having seen him not to be what he appeared to them, each of them endeavours to gain for herself that knight who is at last believed to be "as fine a gentleman of his inches, as any is about the town." And they do so in a way which renders them most ridiculous; for, to make him come to their respective chambers "one of these mornings early or late in an evening," they slander each other and try to disparage their rivals. Much (though not wholly) the same thing occurs with Molière's learned ladies. They cannot be said, it is true, to "have a natural inclination sway, them generally to

the worst, when they are left to themselves"; their love, I acknowledged before, is purer than that evinced by Lady Haughty and her companions. But Belinde's and Armande's endeavours to gain or to recover Clitandre's affection do not differ much from those of the collegiates; especially Armande's efforts to cut out her own sister, and all her behaviour in this affair might be claimed by those ladies. Dauphine is an agreeable "probationer" for the ladies giving themselves much trouble every day to gain to their college some new member, immediately after they have been undeceived of their idols' intrinsic worth; Clitandre is an acceptable son-in-law to Philaminte, as soon as Trissotin's futility has come to light. The latter, just as his fellow-poet Vadius, displays a quality which Jonson attributes to his "bard." Jack Daw, a "precious mannikin" who thinks Homer "an old, tedious, prolix ass," and swears his own verses "are the best that ever man made," takes every opportunity to read them; for, according to him, "an author must recite his own works" (ii, 2). No sooner has it been declared by Lady Haughty in the second scene of the third act that an epithalamium was a want, than he says: "Yes, madam, I'll make an epithalamium, I promise my mistress; I have begun it already; will your ladyship hear it?" Likewise, the poets playing a part in Molière's piece press eagerly for reciting their own works which each of them thinks unparalleled. Both the comedies exhibit a scene where two "protested" fools congratulate each other on qualities which neither of them, in his heart, attributes to his so-called friend. In the fifth act of *Epicène*, Daw and La-Foole, instigated by Clerimont, extoll one another's merits by which each of them is said to be the prime man in the ladies' affections and direct all their actions. Trissotin and Vadius do not, it is true, praise each other from the same motive (for their talk turns on their poems); nevertheless, I should rather hazard the opinion that that scene reminded one of the mentioned scenes in the English author's comedy.

Lastly, I have to speak of a scene of Molière's work where, in the space of one page, two tests of my thesis are contained; I mean the third

scene of the first act. Not so because Clitandre, with whose reasonable opinions those of the author himself, to be sure, are to be identified, blames the mania of the women of the time to be and appear learned, just as Chrysale does in the seventh scene of the second act, and he agrees with Jonson in that blame in general; for that is, in my opinion, quite natural considering the like subject of the pieces. But Clitandre, in agreement with Jonson, utters a thought which is not a natural consequence of that subject and that is why all this finds a place here. By saying:

"Et j'aime que souvent, aux questions qu'on fait,
Elle sache ignorer les choses qu'elle sait;
De son étude enfin je veux qu'elle se cache;
Et qu'elle ait du savoir sans vouloir qu'on le sache,"

he repeats old Morose's thought who addresses his wife that is to be, in this manner: ". . . . And do you alone so much differ from all them, that what they, with so much circumstance, affect and toil for, to seem learn'd, to seem judicious, to seem sharp and conceited, you can bury in yourself with silence . . . ?" And Clitandre's lady-love, in answering his words utterly depreciative of her own mother, gives him counsel which we hear Truewit give his friend Dauphine in *Epicœne* (iv, 1): "and fail not to make the household and servants yours, yea the whole family, and salute them by their names ('t is but light cost, if you can purchase them so) and make her physician your pensioner, and her chief woman." Molière has expressed the same thought in this manner:

"Un amant fait sa cour o'ù s'attache son cœur;
Il veut de tout le monde y gagner la faveur;
Et pour n'avoir personne à sa flamme contraire,
Jusqu'au chien du logis il s'efforce de plaire."

EUGENE LESER.

New York.

*E in TUTTI E TRE, TUTTE E TRE.**

THE latest expression on this subject is found in 'Philologische Abhandlungen Heinrich Schweizer-Sidler, zur Feier des fünfzigjährigen Jubiläums seiner Docententhätigkeit an

*The subject includes *e* in the combination of *tutti*, *tutte* with all numerals from *due* to *nove* inclusive. *Tre* is written throughout merely to prevent any possible confusion in the mind of the reader.

der Zürcher Hochschule':¹ "Tutti e tre," von Heinrich Morf. The first two pages of the article review previous opinions as to this *e*, as follows:

Salviati² thought it was equivalent to a shortened *cioè*,—omnes, id est tres (Diez, 'Gram.,' iii³, 40 note, does not accept this suggestion)—Ascoli³ makes mention of it in speaking of another word: "La voce per *ambo è amanduos*, in notevole accordo coll'it. *amendue*, e deve trattarsi di *amb-ed-due*, cfr. tutti e tre." "Auch das wird nicht befriedigen" (Morf); "Als Copula verstanden hätte es keinen Sinn" (Diez)—Blanc⁴ saw in the *e* the plural of the masculine article "welcher bei den alten häufig *e* statt *i* lautete." Its use was extended also to feminine nouns, before which it took the place of the feminine article: *tutte e tre le donne*. Morf says of this view:

"Schon Diez hat Blanc entgegengehalten, dass dann unerklärt bleibt, warum man heute nicht auch *tutti e cavalli* sagt, das selbstverständlich von den ältern Texten, welche überhaupt *e* statt *i* haben, geboten wird. Man wird es unerklärlich finden, dass die Italienische Schriftsprache diese Form des Artikels in der Verbindung von *tutti tutte* mit kardinalen bevorzugt haben, sonst aber der gewöhnlichen Form *i* treu geblieben sein und auf diese Weise einen vorher augenfälligen Parallelismus der Konstruktion zerstört haben sollte.—Was aber vollends Blanc's Auffassung unhaltbar macht ist der Umstand dass diejenigen Texte, welche als Pluralform des masc. Artikels *e* bieten, gar nicht *tutti e tre* sondern *tutti a tre* aufweisen."

Having reached a construction in which an *a* occurs, the rest of the article consists of a discussion of this construction, showing that the *a* does not represent the preposition *ad*, but that the original form was *tutta tre*, and a remnant of the Latin neuter. The writer comes near his subject again only when he says *tutta* > *tutte* by analogy to *due*. But the *e* is left altogether unnoticed. Ascoli's explanation "wird nicht befriedigen," Blanc's is "unhaltbar," but nothing else is suggested. Does *tutta tre* have any bearing on the question of *e* in *tutti e tre*? Evidently not, for

¹ "Zürich," 1891, pp. 71-79.

² 'Avvertimenti della lingua sopra il Decamerone' Milano, 1809 Lib. 4, part 4.

³ *Archivio Glottologico Italiano*, i, 204.

⁴ 'Grammatik der Italienischen Sprache.' Halle, 1844.